

## MDT Highlights Transportation Interim Committee (TIC) July 13, 2023

### SAFETY

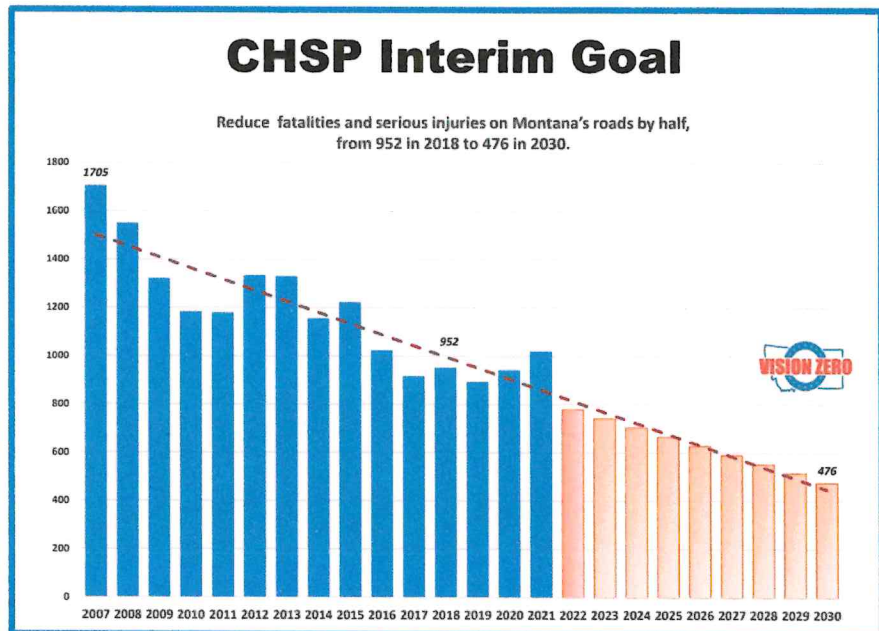
#### *Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Overview*

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is a core Federal-aid program with the purpose to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned roads and roads on tribal land. The HSIP requires a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads with a focus on performance.

MDT follows the guidelines noted above; data-driven and a strategic approach. MDT annually screens the entire state, including City, County and Tribal owned roads to identify crash trends and potential safety projects that meet the goals of the Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP). Projects are then prioritized based on a benefit cost calculation. Although there are many worthy projects across the state, highest benefit cost projects are nominated first with available funding. The benefit cost takes into account the crash modification factor of a proposed safety improvement, addressable crashes and an estimated project cost.

#### *Montana Crash Data*

Crash data analysis helps identify the leading traffic safety problems so that additional emphasis and a focused approach is taken in determining appropriate safety countermeasures to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on Montana's roadways. All crash data is reported by all law enforcement agencies via the Montana Highway Patrol's Web-based Crash Data System.



### ***Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP)***

The CHSP was first developed and implemented in 2007 in a cooperative process with local, state, federal, tribal, and other safety partners and stakeholders that make up the Advisory Committee. It is a data-driven, multi-year comprehensive plan that establishes statewide safety targets, objectives, and key emphasis areas and includes the four Es of highway safety – engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency medical services (EMS). The CHSP enables coordination of safety programs and partners to work together to cooperatively address safety issues, align goals, and leverage resources to reduce fatal and serious injuries on Montana's roadways.

In 2023, the Advisory Committee identified Post Crash Care as an Emphasis Area to:

- Address responder safety by advancing training and safety of Traffic Incident Management Systems (TIMS).
- Improve the safety of the traveling public and responders (including law enforcement, emergency medical, fire personnel, highway workers, and tow operators).
- Improve response time in the event of a crash.

Montana's crash data analysis (see overview in Subtopic 2 above) identified the leading areas in need of additional focus under the CHSP as the Roadway Departure & Intersection-related Crashes, Impaired Driving, and Unrestrained Vehicle Occupants Emphasis Areas.



**SAVE THE DATES**  
**OCTOBER 4 & 5**

**2023 Annual Transportation Safety Meeting**

**Delta Colonial Hotel**  
2301 Colonial Drive, Helena, MT

This event brings together federal, state, tribal, and local safety partners to share implementation of Montana's Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) emphasis areas, assess progress in reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries, and explore new opportunities to enhance traffic safety awareness.

**Emphasis Areas:**

- Roadway Departures & Intersection-related Crashes
- Impaired Driving Crashes
- Unrestrained Vehicle Occupants
- Emergency Response -After-Crash Care

The agenda is under development and will be posted at [www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/chsp-meetings.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/chsp-meetings.shtml).

For additional information, please contact Pam Langve-Davis at 406-444-7646 or [plangvedavis@mt.gov](mailto:plangvedavis@mt.gov).

**Note:** Montana's CHSP Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is made up of leaders that have a stake in roadway and traffic safety and includes relevant state agencies and organizations.

### ***Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment***

IIJA requires states to complete a VRU Safety Assessment **by November 15, 2023**. The purpose of this assessment is to identify and develop strategies to reduce safety risks to vulnerable road users (people that walk, bicycle, or roll) in areas identified as high-risk. This assessment includes data analysis of all crashes involving a VRU reported by law enforcement in Montana, as well as specific attention to fatalities and serious injuries and contributing factors which will inform the identification of strategies and countermeasures to reduce risks. This assessment is currently underway for Montana.



## FUNDING

### ***MDT Revenue Bills from the 2023 Legislative Session***

- HB 267 (Rep. Sprunger) – Also known as the SAFER Act, this legislation transfers \$100 million General Fund to MDT to provide the state match for federal redistribution funding and federal discretionary grants awarded to MDT. Expenditures are capped at \$15 million per year until funds are exhausted.
- SB 536 (Sen. Hertz) – This legislation transfers \$100 million from the General Fund to MDT for local road and bridge maintenance and repair. The first \$20 million is allocated to cities and towns with populations of less than 10,000 for road and bridge repair. The remaining \$80 million is available to MDT to fund or match projects on the state's urban or secondary systems, off-system bridges, and as a potential matching source for discretionary grants awarded to local governments.
- HB 55 (Rep. Loge) – This legislation provides for a 3 cent per kilowatt hour tax on public electric vehicle charging stations phased in by 2025.
- HB 60 (Rep. Loge) – This legislation establishes a registration fee on Montana-based electric vehicles (EVs).
- HB 439 (Rep. Loge) – This legislation establishes a registration fee on permanently registered Montana-based EVs.
- HB 823 (Rep. Loge) – This legislation broadens the taxation on alternative fuels to include hydrogen and any other alternative fuel that may emerge.

### ***Redistribution of Federal Funds – Montana Update***

MDT's annual allocation has grown over the years, with the department notably having success in securing additional funding through "redistribution" of federal funds:

- Redistribution happens at the end of each federal fiscal year (September 30<sup>th</sup>), when FHWA takes any remaining funds and distributes it to state DOTs that have projects ready. Those state DOTs are given about a month to obligate those funds, so all projects selected must be "shovel ready."
- The last three years have yielded significant funding opportunities for Montana, thanks to MDT's excellent preparation in securing funds for state highway projects: \$59 million secured in 2020, \$46 million secured in 2021, and \$119 million secured in 2022.
- FHWA notified MDT that the estimated redistribution for Montana for 2023 is \$30.6 million. The department has projects "shovel ready" to ensure these funds can be fully obligated (funding from SAFER Act available now to utilize as match, when/where needed).

Based on the approach Congress takes to allocating highway funding, MDT's levels of contract authority are reduced when large amounts of redistribution funding are accepted for Montana. This decreases the amount of Federal Program carried forward to the next federal fiscal year and Tentative Construction Plan (TCP) cycle. Requesting additional redistribution in August would decrease these levels further, which could result in MDT not being able to obligate the full program next year. It could also impact MDT's flexibility to respond to unexpected events or

disasters like the flooding that occurred in 2022. ***(See included attachment detailing additional candidate projects for FFY 2023 redistribution funds.)***

#### Redistribution and SAFER Funding (HB 267)

The SAFER Act (HB 267) was passed during the 68<sup>th</sup> legislative session in 2023 and will support MDT's future efforts in securing federal redistribution funds by allowing the state to match (as required) these funds.

#### ***Federal Discretionary Grants Update***

Since the passage of IIJA in November 2021, Montana has received \$208,521,950 in transportation-related funding from various federal discretionary grant programs. ***(See included rollout attachment for details behind grant programs and Montana recipients.)***

MDT submitted a total of eight (8) discretionary grant applications as the Lead Applicant in FY 2022 and has submitted or is in the process of submitting six (6) discretionary grant applications as the Lead Applicant in FY 2023.

#### Discretionary Grants and SAFER Funding (HB 267)

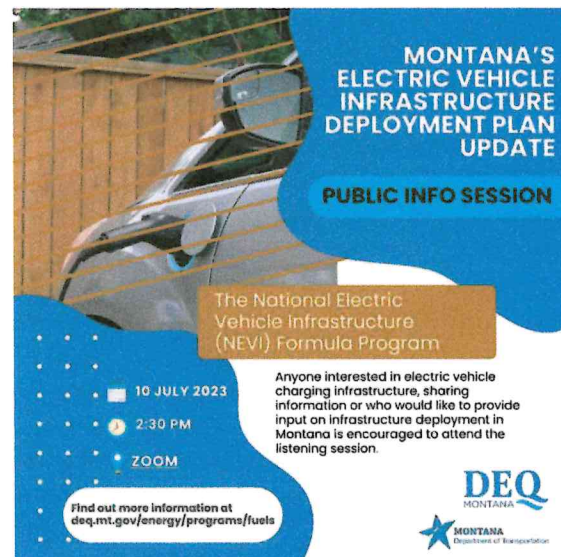
The SAFER Act (HB 267) was passed during the 68<sup>th</sup> legislative session in 2023 and will support MDT's future efforts in competing for discretionary grant awards for transportation improvements by allowing the state to match (as federally required) requested grant funding.

#### ***National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Funding Update***

Montana will receive approximately \$43 million over five years (FY 2022-2026) from the federal NEVI program. To date, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has appropriated funding for FY 2022 and FY 2023. These funds are available until they are expended. FY 2024-2026 allocations from the NEVI program are contingent upon FHWA's approval of annual updates (federally required) to Montana's EV Infrastructure Deployment Plan. MDT does not plan to own or operate NEVI-funded projects.

#### State EV/Alternative Fuel Legislation

Several bills (HB 55, HB 60, HB 439, HB 823) related to EV and alternative fuel revenues were passed during the 68<sup>th</sup> legislative session in 2023. These bills will provide revenue from public EV charging stations, establish registration fees for EVs in Montana, and will broaden tax revenue on alternative fuels.



Public meeting promotional graphic used by MDT and DEQ to promote a public listening session taking place on July 10, 2023. These listening sessions are a federal requirement under the NEVI program.



### Shared Use Paths (SUP) Funding Update

There are approximately 203 miles of SUPs within state maintained federal-aid highway right of way in Montana:

- A one-time investment of approximately \$535,000 is needed to restore SUPs in disrepair to “good” condition.
- The annual estimated cost for maintenance of these paths (snow removal, general maintenance, and pavement preservation) is about \$908,807.
- Montana’s SUP fund is funded by the state’s \$5 opt-in fee on vehicle registration. This fund averages about \$2,300 a month in revenue, with 80% being allocated to maintenance (approximately \$22,000/year).
- Federal Programs that fund non-motorized infrastructure (sidewalks, ADA, SUPs, etc.):
  - MDT’s five-year annual average expenditures on all non-motorized infrastructure (sidewalks, ADA, SUPs, etc.) is about \$9.3 million.
  - MDT’s five-year annual average expenditure on the construction of SUPs is about \$2.1 million.

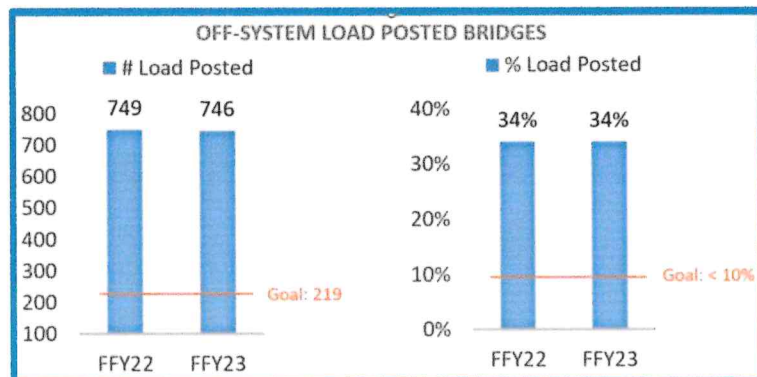
## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Update on Montana Bridges

MDT has reviewed off-system bridges and identified structures that are good candidates to benefit from short-term repairs as part of Montana’s bridge rehabilitation strategy. This list of bridge candidates was created to identify opportunities to leverage temporary repair methods on currently load

posted or subject to other restrictions across the state. The repair options for the candidates were selected based on past work performed by MDT to address similar issues for on-system bridges. At a high level, this repair work is intended to be a temporary, efficient, economical solution to maintain safe infrastructure until a time when more robust rehabilitation or replacement work for the structure can be completed. These repairs are not intended to be long-lasting solutions, but rather address serious condition issues and allow the bridge in question to remain in service while the long-term project (rehabilitation or replacement) is planned. Once a short-term repair is completed, an inspection and updated bridge load rating is required to address existing load postings and/or restrictions on the repaired bridge.

MDT is also planning advancing project(s) to perform potential bridge repairs utilizing federal and/or state funding. The less complex short-term repairs to bridges would be part of a package



*This graphic represents the number of off-system load posted bridges in Montana in comparison to the percentage of the same structures between the last two federal fiscal years (FFY).*



that MDT funds and shepherds. The more complex short-term repairs would be assisted by MDT advancing repair contract(s) using state funds allocated through legislative action during the 68<sup>th</sup> session (SB 536).

#### Funding Sources

**State Funding** – The state funding allocated by the legislature this year (SB 536) can be used for the short-term bridge repairs identified in the attached list. MDT will be contacting affected Counties with further guidance on seeking reimbursement for eligible work/expenses. SB 536 funds can also be used for bridge replacements, which is the long-term fix that many off-system bridges require. However, it is important to remember that this funding is not dedicated solely to off-system bridges. Over the coming months, MDT will develop a strategy to direct this funding equitably and wisely.

**Federal Funding** – MDT is aggressively advancing strategies for bridge replacements. The need is massive, so a coordinated effort between MDT and the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) is critical to pursue federal discretionary grants. MDT and MACo are actively engaged in that coordination.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

### ***Amtrak Study on Proposed Passenger Rail Services in Montana***

MDT's efforts in rail include limited rail planning activities (e.g., rail plan and grade separation studies), making improvements to highway rail grade crossings, maintaining an inventory of all public rail/road crossings, managing a small loan program for rehabilitation and construction of light density rail lines, and continued public support of the Empire Builder. MDT does not operate any rail lines, has a limited role interacting with railroads, and has no jurisdiction over them.

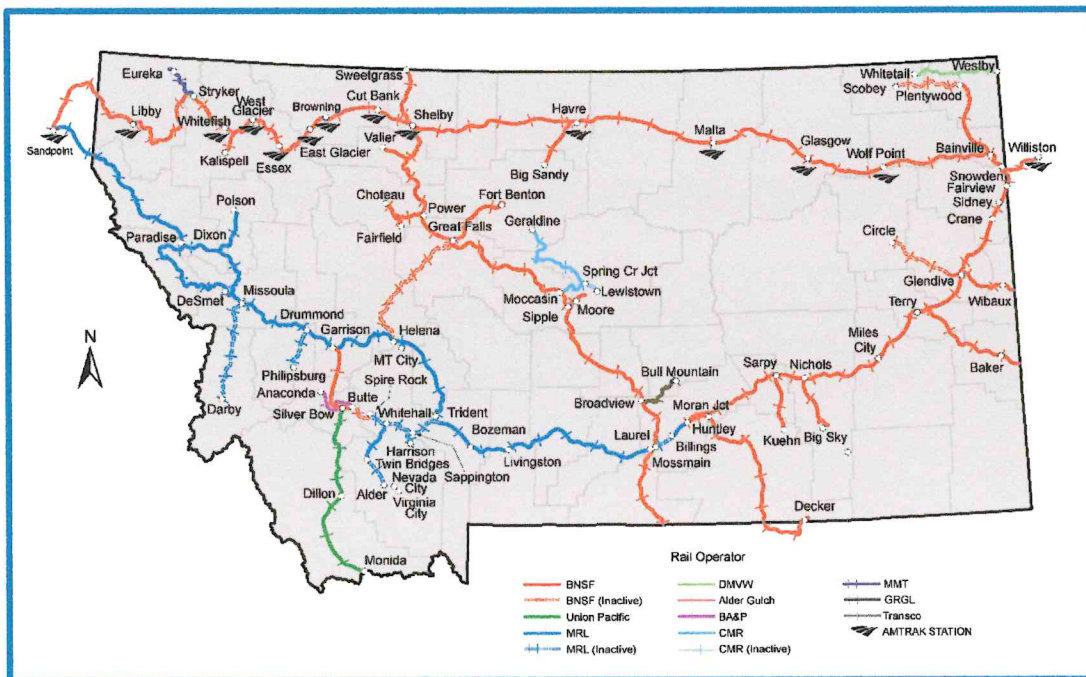
Two feasibility studies regarding restoration of the North Coast Hiawatha (NCH) were performed in 2008 - 2010. The first study, *North Coast Hiawatha Passenger Rail Study*, was required by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) and the other study, *Feasibility Report on Proposed Amtrak Services in Southern Montana*, was at MDT's request and prepared by Amtrak. The PRIIA directed study analyzed the entire proposed NCH route between Chicago and Seattle. Amtrak consulted with host railroads Metra, CP, BNSF and MRL who own the trackage on the various route segments. In addition, Amtrak held several outreach meetings with state and elected officials. MDT's directed study analyzed the route between Sandpoint, ID and Williston, ND, with a more in-depth look at the route between Billings and Missoula. This more in-depth analysis performed a complete route inspection and an order of magnitude in capital costs, estimated ridership, and more. Conclusions of the Billings to Missoula route study include:

- A one-time capital cost of \$160 million (in 2009 dollars) was needed to restore the NCH between Billings and Missoula.



- An estimated ridership of 300,000 per year by rail – and reduce Empire Builder ridership by 65,000.
- Estimated annual revenue of \$400,000.
- Amtrak recommended that states provide the required capital and operating funds if they wanted the NCH restored.

Unless federal legislation changes, there is currently no dedicated federal funding for the operation of new and restored long distance routes (routes > 750 miles). Routes less than 750 miles long are state subsidized – pursuant to federal code. In the proposing of annual budgets, the President of the United States has the power to require that states pay an increased share of operating subsidies for long distance passenger rail routes.

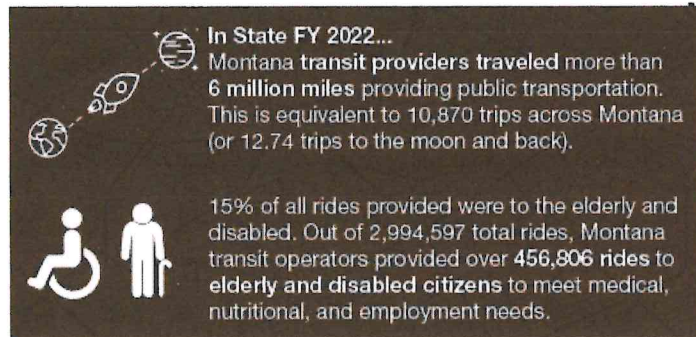


This Railway Map\* demonstrates track operators and rail providers in Montana. ([2022 Fact Book](#))

\*Note that track currently designated as under operation by MRL will be taken over by BNSF in early 2024

## ***Transit & Public Transportation in Montana***

Public transit in Montana provides rides to any person in need of transportation. This service has literally become a lifeline for many Montanans who need public transportation to access medical and nutritional services, providing them with a connection to the rest of the world.



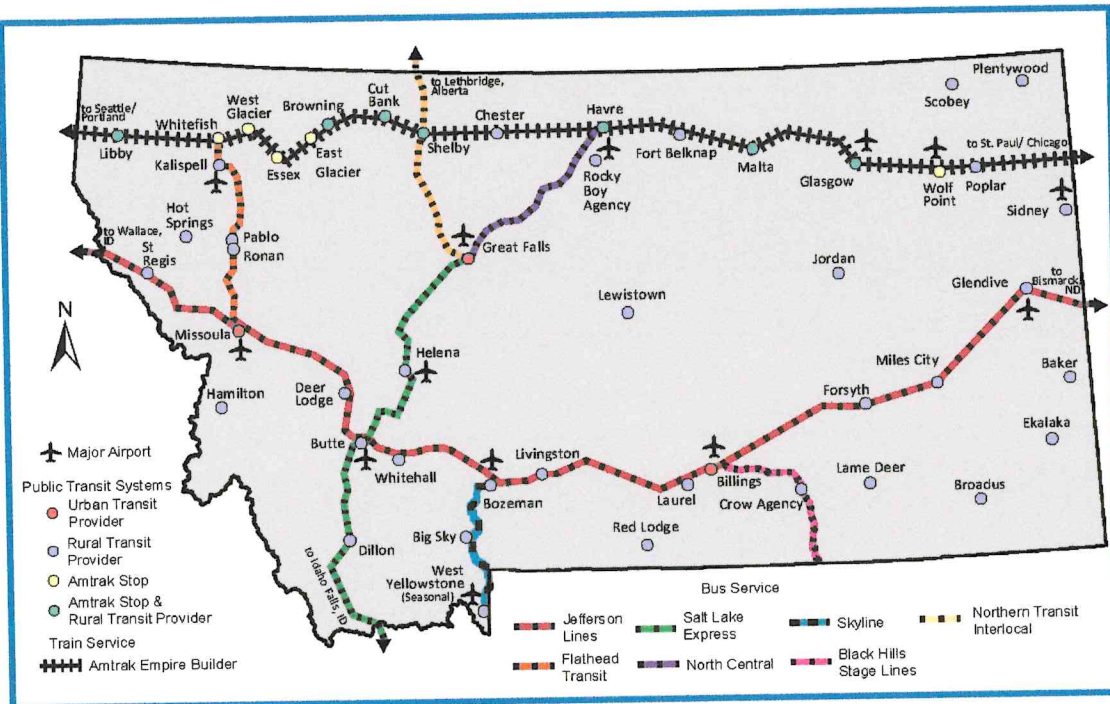
*Transit provider data for State Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 taken from [2022 Fact Book](#).*

MDT passes millions of dollars in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding to local transit providers across Montana. Transit systems in Montana develop their own routes and services locally, and MDT provides technical assistance and support for all rural transit activities. MDT is only one of the direct recipients of federal public transportation funding coming into the state. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that include Billings, Great Falls, Missoula, and most recently Helena and Bozeman, as well as tribal governments also receive a portion of this funding directly.

## **Funding Overview and Updates**

- MDT administers pass-through transit grant funding to local governments and providers of public transportation. MDT does not play a role in operations or management of transit systems.
- The increase in public transportation due to the passage of IIJA in 2021 equates to a little over \$7 million in additional funding annually over current levels to improve public transportation in Montana. For MDT, this is approximately a 30% increase in the first year of IIJA with gradual increases (approximately 2%) each additional year of the bill (FY 2022-2026).
- The non-federal match requirement for local government and transit providers will continue to be the biggest challenge to Montana utilizing federal public transportation funding.
- MDT will continue to award public transportation funding at the federally increased level through the existing annual application process for operating and capital assistance.
- MDT will continue to apply for discretionary grants on behalf of non-MPO local transit providers for supplemental funding for specialized projects as requested by local transit agencies. These specialized projects range from heavy duty and/or electric buses to new facility construction and/or upgrades to a facility.





*This Intercity & Local Transit Services Map demonstrates service providers and routes for public transportation in Montana.*  
([2022 Fact Book](#))

## Attachment A: Additional Candidate Projects for FFY 2023 Redistribution Funds

County	UPN	Funding Source	Project Name	Anticipated Scope	Total Cost	State Match
<b>District 1 - Missoula</b>						
				Total Cost - District 1 :	\$ -	\$ -
<b>District 2 - Butte</b>						
Jefferson	9741-000	STPP	Elkhorn Road - South	Chip Seal	\$ 1,241,756	\$ 166,642
Gallatin	10001-000	IM	Bozeman - East	Mill & Fill	\$ 8,973,652	\$ 786,091
				Total Cost - District 2 :	\$ 10,215,408	\$ 952,733
<b>District 3 - Great Falls</b>						
				Total Cost - District 3 :	\$ -	\$ -
<b>District 4 - Glendive</b>						
Garfield, McCone	9456-000	STPP	Flowing Wells - North (MT-24)	Minor Rehab	\$ 5,082,020	\$ 682,006
Phillips	10226-000	STPS	Dodson - South	Overlay	\$ 669,138	\$ 89,797
				Total Cost - District 4 :	\$ 5,751,158	\$ 771,803
<b>District 5 - Billings</b>						
Stillwater	9859-000	IM	Columbus - East	Mill & Fill	\$ 13,646,463	\$ 1,195,429
				Total Cost - District 5 :	\$ 13,646,463	\$ 1,195,429

<b>Total Estimated Cost - All Districts :</b>	<b>\$ 29,613,029</b>
Estimated Federal Portion :	\$ 26,693,064
Estimated State Match :	\$ 2,919,965



FY 22-23 Statewide Total = \$208,521,950

Total Grant Funding for Transportation Received in the State Since the Passage of ILJA

Project & Applicant	Type	Award Amount	Date Awarded
<b>FY 2022</b>			
<b>Total Award Amount =</b>		<b>\$124,640,647</b>	
<b>Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)</b>			
Columbia Falls Gateway to Glacier Safety and Mobility Improvement Project - City of Columbia Falls *	Construction	\$10,021,688	8/11/2022
Northern Cheyenne Rosebud Cut-Across US 212 to MT 39 - Northern Cheyenne Tribe	Construction	\$15,867,114	8/11/2022
Lake County Road Reconstruction - Lake County	Construction	\$12,941,413	8/11/2022
Chippewa Cree Tribe Route 6 Planning Grant w/Bureau of Indian Affairs & Tribal Transportation Program	Planning	\$2,186,233	8/11/2022
<b>FTA Low-No Emission and Bus and Bus Facilities Program</b>			
Missoula Urban Transportation District	Low/No Emission	\$10,909,127	8/16/2022
City of Billings, MET Transit Division	Low/No Emission	\$3,880,316	8/16/2022
Blackfeet Tribe	Buses/Facilities	\$1,375,920	8/16/2022
<b>Multimodal Planning Discretionary Grants (MPDG)</b>			
West Reserve Drive: Hutton Ranch Road to Whitefish Stage Road Inspection Project - City of Kalispell*	Construction	\$25,000,000	12/21/2022
<b>Bridge Investment Program (BIP)</b>			
Flathead County Bridge Improvement Project - Flathead County	Planning	\$240,000	1/4/2023
<b>Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)</b>			
Safe Streets Plan - City of Whitefish *	Planning	\$160,000	2/1/2023
South Avenue Safe Streets and Roads for All Program - City of Missoula & Missoula County *	Construction	\$9,311,254.08	2/1/2023
Safety Action Plan for Highway 212 - Rosebud County *	Planning	\$95,440	2/1/2023
Main Street Corridor Study - Kalispell City Council *	Planning	\$520,000	2/1/2023
Blackfeet Safe Streets and Roads for All - Blackfeet Tribe of the Blacktree Indian Reservation	Planning	\$797,105	2/1/2023
CSKT Safe Streets and Roads for All - CSKT	Planning	\$368,000	2/1/2023
<b>Thriving Communities Program (TCP)</b>			
Big Sky Economic Development with Native American Development Corporation and Seventh Generation InterTribal Center	Planning	Not Applicable	4/7/2023
<b>Rail Crossing Elimination (RCE)</b>			
Rail Corridor Crossing Study - City of Whitefish *	Planning	\$400,000	6/5/2023
<b>Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP)</b>			
US 93 Ninepipe and Post Creek Sections Project - CSKT *	Construction	\$30,567,037	7/6/2023
<b>Total Award Amount =</b>		<b>\$83,881,303</b>	
<b>FY 2023</b>			
<b>FTA Low-No Emission and Bus and Bus Facilities Program</b>			
Electric Bus System - City of Missoula	Construction	\$39,142,124	6/26/2023
<b>Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)</b>			
Main/Marcus Street Multimodal Planning & Design Study - City of Hamilton *	Planning	\$877,275	6/28/2023
Missoula Downtown Safety & Multimodal Connectivity - City of Missoula *	Construction	\$24,535,398	6/28/2023
Anaconda-Deer Lodge Mill Creek Rd Project - Anaconda-Deer Lodge County *	Construction	\$19,326,506	6/28/2023

**Notes:**

- 1) \* denotes MDT supported
- 2) MDT did not receive any discretionary funding awards FY 2022 nor FY 2023 as of 7/7/2023
- 3) As of 7/7/2023, total amount of discretionary funding made available from ILJA from FY22 awards to date is estimated at \$10.5 billion
- 4) As of 7/7/2023, total amount of discretionary funding made available from ILJA from FY23 awards to date is estimated at \$3.5 billion
- 5) Total discretionary funding made available from currently 5 released NOFO's (PROTECT, WCPP, MPDG, RCN, SS4A) is estimated at \$11 billion